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A FEW  
THOUGHTS  
UPON THE  
LOVE AND SACRIFICE  
OF  
JESUS CHRIST.

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SENT BY  
A Well-wisher to Religion,  
IN A  
LETTER to his Correspondent.

*I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the  
knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Phil. iii. 8.*

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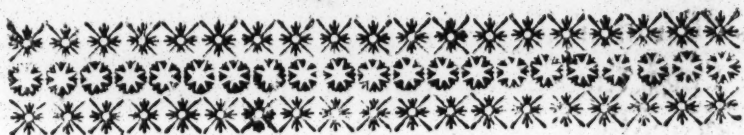


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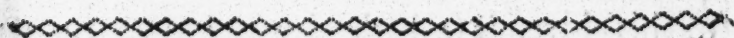
# THOUGHTS

UPON THE

LOVE AND SACRIFICE

OF

# JESUS CHRIST.



EPHES. V. 2.

*And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.*

THE love of Christ is the wonder of angels. The love of Christ is the subject of the triumphant songs of the saints above. The love of Christ is the joy of saints below. The apostle Paul not only enforced every moral duty by evangelical motives, but embraced every opportunity of treating upon the love of Christ. The love of Christ should be the daily subject

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of our religious conversation, and the darling theme of our pious meditation. I propose therefore, for my own benefit, and for the benefit of a few of mine acquaintances,

I. To employ a few thoughts upon the heavenly Lover, JESUS CHRIST.

II. To consider the freedom of his love: He hath loved us *men*, and us *sinners*.

III. To consider this wonderful effect of his love, He hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice.

IV. To consider, whence it is that the offering and sacrifice of Christ is a sweet-smelling favour unto God.

LASTLY. To draw some inferences from the subject.

1. I am to employ a few thoughts upon the heavenly Lover, JESUS CHRIST.-----  
He is truly and properly God; God equal with the Father; God over all, and blessed  
for



## REDEEMING LOVE. 5

for evermore; one in essence, and in will and affection, with the Father and the Eternal Spirit. This is evident from the following considerations. 1. The perfections of God are ascribed to him: for JEHOVAH himself saith of him, "My name is in him;" and he saith of himself, "Before Abraham was, I AM \*." 2. Creation is ascribed to him; for "by him," saith the Spirit of inspiration, "the worlds were made," and "without him was not any thing made that was made." 3. Preservation is ascribed to him; for "he" saith an inspired apostle, "is the Saviour of all men," and "by him all things consist." 4. The worship, adoration, and praise of angels and men, is due to him; for "when he" the ETERNAL FATHER, "bringeth the first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him;" and it is the revealed will of the Father, "That all

\* I AM, is the incommunicable name of God, and denotes his being the self-existent, self-sufficient, and all-sufficient Jehovah.

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“ all men should honour the Son, even as  
“ they honour the Father.”

II. I am to consider the freedom of his love. He hath loved us *men*, and us *sinners*.---1. He hath loved us *men*. Mankind is the lowest order of the rational creation, so far as we know. Angels are originally creatures of a far nobler nature, and a far higher order, than we. Yet he took not hold of the nature of angels, but of the seed of Abraham. 2. He hath loved us *sinners*, who have trampled upon his authority, and broken his law; who have plunged our selves into misery, and exposed ourselves to eternal misery; who could not extricate ourselves out of misery, and were neither pitying ourselves, nor asking pity from him, but going on in a continued course of rebellion against him. God, indeed, at first, made man after his own image in knowledge, in righteousness, and in true holiness. He placed him in Eden, a garden planted by his own right hand, where he enjoyed all the comforts of life, and had sweet intercourse and communion with his Maker.

He

## REDEEMING LOVE. 7

He entered into a covenant with him, whereby life and happiness might have been obtained, or rather retained, had man kept the covenant. Man broke the covenant, dishonoured his Maker, threw off his allegiance to the sovereign Majesty of heaven and earth, plunged himself into an abyss of misery, and exposed himself to eternal inexpressible misery and woe. Our understandings are now by nature darkened, yea darkness itself. Our wills are corrupt and perverse. Our affections are misplaced and irregular. We are by nature children of the wrath of an infinite God, and heirs of the torments of an everlasting hell; dead in trespasses and sins; rebels up in arms against God, and going farther and farther from the God of our life, and the author of all our mercies. And in this wretched, this miserable, this helpless condition we were, when Jesus Christ, the son of God, manifested his love to us. But this leads me to the next thing to be considered.

III. I am to consider this wonderful effect of his love, He hath given himself for us,  
an

## 8 THOUGHTS UPON

an offering and a sacrifice.---1. He hath given *himself*, that is, his soul and his body, for us. He hath poured out his soul in agonies under the avenging wrath of God, and his life in death under the curse of a broken covenant. His face was defiled with spitting. His head was pierced with a crown of thorns. His back was torn with lashes. His hands and feet were pierced with cruel nails. His side was pierced with the soldier's spear. His soul was pierced through with many sorrows. The sword of divine justice went deep into his soul, and had awful effects upon his body :---witness, his declaration unto his disciples, " My soul is " exceeding sorrowful, even unto death : " ---witness, his prostration in the garden, " He " fell on his face : " ---witness, the weighty drops of blood which distilled from his body, and fell to the ground; " His sweat was as " it were great drops of blood falling down " to the ground : " ---witness, the strong cries and many tears which he offered up to his Father. " Now," says he, " is my soul " troubled, and what shall I say? Father " save me from this hour." " O my Fa-  
" ther,



## REDEEMING LOVE. 9

“ther, if it be possible, let this cup pass  
 “from me.” In the time of his greatest  
 outward sufferings, his Father, and his God,  
 hid his face from him: not one ray of com-  
 fort came from him to the soul of his only  
 begotten and best beloved Son, which made  
 him cry out on the cross, “My God, my  
 “God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

2. He hath given himself for us. This  
 intimates his willingness to suffer for us.  
 “No man,” saith he, “taketh my life  
 “from me; but I lay it down of myself.  
 “I have power to lay it down, and I have  
 “power to take it again: this commandment  
 “have I received of my Father. “I  
 “have,” saith he, “a baptism to be bap-  
 “tized with, and how am I straitned ’till it  
 “be accomplished.” Speaking of his last  
 passover he saith, “With desire have I de-  
 “desired to eat this passover before I suffer.”

When Peter would have dissuaded him from  
 suffering, he rebuked him sharply, saying,  
 “Get thee behind me Satan, for thou sa-  
 “vourest not the things that be of God, but  
 “the things that be of men.” When  
 he

## 10 THOUGHTS UPON

he uttered these amazing words, "Now is  
 " my soul troubled, and what shall I say?  
 " Father save me from this hour"---he im-  
 " mediately added, " But for this cause  
 " came I unto this hour." When he cried  
 unto his Father, " O my Father, if it be  
 " possible, let this cup pass from me"---  
 he immediately added, " Nevertheless, not  
 " as I will, but as thou wilt." He said  
 unto Judas the traitor, as he sat at meat  
 with him, " That thou dost, do quickly."  
 He said unto his disciples, when they seem-  
 ed to linger in the house, after he had eaten  
 his last passover, instituted the sacrament of  
 the supper, and given suitable instructions  
 to them, " As the Father gave me command-  
 " ment, even so I do: arise, let us go  
 " hence." He met the multitude that came  
 to apprehend him, and told them, That he  
 was the person whom they sought. When  
 Peter smote a servant of the high priest,  
 and seemed as if he would have proceeded  
 further, in order to rescue his Master out  
 of the hands of those that sought his life,  
 and thirsted for his blood, he said, " Put  
 " up thy sword into the sheath. The cup  
 " which

## REDEEMING LOVE. 11

“ which my Father hath given me, shall I  
“ not drink it.” When he was accused of  
many things before Pontius Pilate the  
Roman governor, he answered not a word.  
In short---It was abundantly evident from  
the tenor of his behaviour after he entred  
upon his public ministry, that he had it still  
in his eye, and upon his heart, to lay down  
his life for his sheep. 3. He hath given  
himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice.  
He hath substituted himself in our law-room,  
and born the punishment that was due to our  
sins. He hath become our surety, our goel,  
our near kinsman. He hath obeyed the law  
in our room. He hath suffered, and bled,  
and groan’d, and died, in our stead.

For us he liv’d, and in our stead he dy’d.

When we reflect upon the offering and  
sacrifice which Jesus Christ made of himself,  
we are to consider his sufferings, as they  
stand connected with his obedience, in the  
scheme of our redemption. I proceed to  
the next thing in the method.

IV. I am to consider, whence it is that the  
offering and sacrifice of Christ is a sweet-  
smelling

## 12 THOUGHTS UPON

smelling favour unto God.---If his human nature had not been spotless and pure, God would never have accepted it as a sacrifice. If it had not been united to the divine nature, God would never have accepted it as a sacrifice for us, and in our room. But the holy human nature of Christ, considered as in personal union with his divine nature, is a sweet-smelling favour unto God, 1. As it is a sacrifice that was offered up, out of love to, and in the room and stead of his people. God not only loves Christ for his own sake, and his people for his sake; but he also loves Christ because he loveth them, and hath laid down his life for them. 2. As it magnifies the law, and makes it honourable;----as it brings more honour to the GREAT LEGISLATOR, than the eternal torments of all the damned can ever do, or than the perpetual obedience of all creatures could ever have done. When he was made under the law, the greatest honour was put upon the divine law that ever was, or ever will be put upon it. Sin is an infinite evil, as it is against an infinite God: and the sufferings



## REDEEMING LOVE. 13

ferings of the damned to eternity are but finite sufferings, as they are finite creatures that suffer; and so cannot satisfy the justice of God for an infinite offence. But here is a sufferer who is truly divine. The GREAT GOD is our Saviour. I come to the last thing proposed.

LASTLY. I am to draw some inferences from the subject.---1. What manner of love hath the ETERNAL SON of the Eternal Father bestowed upon us, that he hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice! The love of Christ in giving himself for us, infinitely excels every thing that bears a faint resemblance to it here below. "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man," a man who is an eminent blessing to society, "some will even dare to die: but God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners," enemies to him in our minds, and by wicked works, "Christ died for us." No manifestation of divine love towards angels, or towards arch-angels, ever equaled that of the

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the Saviour to his people. He passed by the angels that fell: and they are reserved in chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. He indeed confirmed the angels of light and glory that kept their first habitation: but he obeyed the law in the room of mankind sinners; he died, he died on a cross; he suffered a dreadful eclipse of his Father's countenance, and bore a pressure of divine wrath which was more than sufficient to have sunk all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, to the lowest hell; for the redemption of his church and people among mankind. 2. As the work of man's redemption, was too difficult for any mere creature in heaven, or on earth; so the glory of redemption-work, was too great for any of the princes on earth, or of the potentates of heaven. The glory of obeying the divine law in the room of thousands and ten thousands of the human race, and satisfying divine justice for innumerable offences against an infinite God, and of thus bringing in a righteousness that will prove lasting as the days of eternity, was certainly too great for any in

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## REDEEMING LOVE. 15

the universe not above the rank of creatures.

3. If the offering and sacrifice of Christ is a sweet-smelling savour unto God, it should be a sweet-smelling savour unto us. We should acquiesce in JEHOVAH's device of saving sinners thro' the merits and mediation of his dear Son, as a contrivance every way worthy of its glorious Author; and should seek salvation, only in the way that God is pleased to bestow it. 4. What dreadful pains---what inconceivable torments shall be inflicted on those who slight the love, and despise the sacrifice of Christ! "If he that  
"despised Moses law, died without mercy;  
"of how much sorer punishment shall he  
"be thought worthy, who hath troden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted  
"the blood of the covenant," wherewith mankind sinners are sanctified, "an unholy  
"thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace," who applies the redemption of Christ to sinners!

SEVERAL other inferences, and particularly some respecting love to Christ, love to the saints, and love to all that are partakers of

6 THOUGHTS UPON, &c.

of the same nature with ourselves, might have been drawn from the subject : but I will perhaps, in a meditation, afterwards consider,

1. What is that love wherein we should walk. 2. What is implied in our walking in love. 3. How do the love and sacrifice of Christ, when known and believed, dispose us to walk in love.-----In the mean time breakfast calls me away.

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